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Murray's Broadsides

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AN AGNOSTIC
CHRISTIAN
SOCIALIST'S
CONFESSION
OF FAITH
IN ***

39 PROPOSITIONS.



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DEDICATED
TO THE
MEMORY
OF ❁ ❁ ❁ ❁



Jesus, Socrates, Plato,
Buddha, Confucius,
Tacitus, Tolstoi, Paine,
Talleyrand, Volney, Renan,
Gregg, Darwin, Huxley,
Goldwin Smith,
Herbert Spencer

And other great Teachers to
whom I am indebted for the
following ideas.

PROPOSITIONS

Proposition 1.—That all philosophical investigations into cause and effect stop at a first infinite, inscrutable “First Cause” behind the phenomenon. For want of a better term, let us call this “First Cause” God.

Proposition 2.—That the only reliable, demonstrable revelation ever given to man is derived from reason, observation and experience.

Proposition 3.—That the world in which we live is governed by eternal, unchangeable physical laws; therefore, it is foolish and useless to pray to or worship the First Cause with a view of changing or modifying the laws that govern the Universe—man included.

Proposition 4.—That the Laws of Moses which Jews and Christians claim to be an inspired production, is not only a purely human invention, but a very low grade of humanity at that.

Proposition 5.—Whereas monogamy is the only lawful system of marriage recognized by all so-called Christian countries, and whereas the pagan empires of Greece and Rome arrived at this system while the nation which was supposed to get a special inspired law from God sanctioned polygamy; therefore, heathen nations without a divine revelation arrived at a better system of social laws than the nation which was supposed to have received a special divine revelation from God.

Proposition 6.—That the “Ten Commandments” which the churches claim to be the highest code of morals ever given to man, is not only not of a very high order, but of a very low grade; because the first four commandments with capital punishment attached to them refer to matters pertaining to religion, while the commandment forbidding murder is the

sixth in the Decalogue ; while all civilized countries, ignoring this supposed divine law, make it the first in order of importance in all their statutes.

Proposition 7.—That Christianity, if we are to understand by that term the teachings of Christ instead of the teachings of priestcraft, is not a magical, mysterious system of atonement by which bad men and women may be saved from the punishment they deserve for their sins, but a system of ethics based on the principles of the “Golden Rule,” illustrations of which doctrine may be found in the parables of the “Good Samaritan” and the “Last Judgment.”

Proposition 8.—That the doctrine of the immortality of the soul and eternal rewards and punishments did not originate with the Jews at all, but was borrowed by some of their sects such as the Essenes, Christians, Pharisees, etc., from the Greeks and Parsees ; therefore, whoever wishes to speculate in these ideas need not be the least troubled in their minds about the throwing away of the “Old Testament.”

Proposition 9.—That the ordinary run of clergymen are the most selfish, spiteful and indifferent to human welfare of all classes of the community ; therefore, they are not a help to the people to lead better lives, but a stumbling block.

Proposition 10.—That it will have a more beneficial effect on the people to show them the loving, self denying life of Christ as a man, for an example, than to promise them an atonement for bad conduct through the merits of the blood of a crucified god.

Proposition 11.—That the Hebrews, as a people, were not superior in morals or intelligence to the nations by which they were surrounded, therefore inculcating the idea that they were a specially chosen people, is prejudicial to the Jews of the present day and degrading to other nations.

Proposition 12.—That the morals of the ancient Germans (our ancestors), as described by Tacitus, were as high (if not higher) before they ever heard of Christianity than they have ever been since ; therefore, the boast that we have been raised from barbarism by the Bible is pure presumption.

Proposition 13.—That the best way of teaching the people

morals is to give them the best thoughts and example of the best men in all ages, including Jesus, Socrates, Plato, Confucius, Buddha, Tolstoy, Darwin, Huxley, Paine, Renan, Volney and our own grand old man, Herbert Spencer.

Proposition 14.—That the safest way to prepare for eternity, whatever it may have in store for us, is to live good, honest, charitable, industrious, virtuous lives, and to give up depending on prayers, singing hymns, and reading the scandalous records of bad old Hebrews who lived nearly 3000 years ago, and who would have treated us as they treated others who had the misfortune to be their neighbours and who neglected to take sufficient precautions against such cruel, selfish neighbours.

Proposition 15.—That none of our laws and customs are based on the Bible, but were handed down to us from our own ancestors together with the Roman civil law.

Proposition 16.—That desperate efforts have been made by kings and priests to force Semitic and Roman superstition on our forefathers, but they had to give it up.

Proposition 17.—That nature demands a certain amount of human labour, especially in northern countries, to provide food and clothing for the race; therefore these drones and parasites, who produce nothing but consume much, make the task of the toiler much heavier than is either necessary or good for the toilers.

Proposition 18.—That Protestant and Catholic laymen are on much more friendly relation than Protestant and Catholic clergymen, therefore these clergymen are not good examples to their respective flocks.

Proposition 19.—That Moses massacred the dissenters among the Hebrews of his own time, and so crushed the spirit of the people.

Proposition 20.—That the Jews afterwards, in accordance with the Law of Moses, continued to murder their prophets when they advocated any ideas that did not flatter their national vanity, by reminding them that they were a specially chosen people and that all other peoples were to be considered as unclean animals.

Proposition 21.—That the old Hebrew patriarchs, including David, the man after God's own heart, instead of being good models for any people to copy, were bad, vicious men who would have been doing penal servitude for life in any civilized country of the present day.

Proposition 22.—That the clergy while preaching self denial to others, especially the working people, are very careful to look for fat livings for themselves.

Proposition 23.—That instead of getting civil and religious liberty by means of the Bible, as some people foolishly maintain, all the persecutions which disgraced Europe for nearly 2,000 years, were based on the Bible.

Proposition 24.—That when a multitude of conflicting testimonies and accounts are given of the same subject, it is possible for all of them to be wrong, but it is impossible for all of them to be right.

Proposition 25.—That ninety-nine different sects based on the Bible will all agree that the hundredth is wrong, and by applying this process to them all separately, the result will be a vote of 99 to 1 that they are all wrong.

Proposition 26.—That the whole story of the atonement by the blood of Jesus is an evolution of the barbarous idea that the gods delighted in sacrifices.

Proposition 27.—That we have yet learnt only a very small part of the operations of nature and the physical laws that govern the world, therefore we should not waste time in investigating the unknowable till we find out all that is to be known about the knowable.

Proposition 28.—That northern and sea coast peoples have always been superior to southern and inland peoples, therefore it is absurd for the civilized and scientific peoples of Europe and America to allow themselves to be enslaved by Semitic superstitions.

Proposition 29.—That instead of man being created in God's image, man has always been making gods after his own imagination.

Proposition 30.—That the division of time into seven days is a purely human invention, and you might as well try to

prove which was first, the hen or the egg? or try to square the circle, as to try to find out which was the first day or where and when the physical divisions of time commenced.

Proposition 31.—That we are not bound by any laws made by our ancestors, unless these laws commend themselves to our judgment as good and useful for our own generation.

Proposition 32.—That the churches have for ages been making fools and hypocrites of the people, in forcing them to subscribe to dogmas that no one understands and very few believe in.

Proposition 33.—That the different denominations would set up a terrible howl if they found any one of a rival sect living such scandalous lives as Jacob, Lot, David and others.

Proposition 34.—That the people of the United States are acting very inconsistently in making laws against the Mormons and then circulating the Bible which justifies Mormonism.

Proposition 35.—That either the Bible should be abolished or laws against Mormons and other polygamists and bigamists should be repealed.

Proposition 36.—That the church people are the real atheists and blasphemers, as they have reduced God (in their minds) to the level of a man that can be pleased and flattered with music, ritual and other tomfooleries.

Proposition 37.—That all State churches and chaplains should be abolished everywhere without exception, in jails and army and navy, and everywhere; that all marriages should be performed by civil magistrates, and that all cemeteries should be public property.

Proposition 38.—That all Bibles and religious catechisms should be abolished, so as to give the scholars more time to study Euclid's Propositions, science, history, languages, etc.

Proposition 39.—And, finally, that all churches be turned to lecture halls, scientific institutions, gymnasiums, theatres concert halls, etc., etc.

